

AMIAA NEWS

Publication of the Armenian Missionary Association of America
MAY/JUNE 2005 - Vol. XXXIX No. 3 (ISSN 1097-0924)



Armenia's First Lady, Bella Kocharian (middle) Visits the Armenian Evangelical Avedisian School of Yerevan, Armenia.
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A Tribute to Haigazian University - The Jewel of AMAA

Andrew Torigian



AMAA NEWS

is a publication of
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The AMAA is a Tax Exempt, not for profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)

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Paramus, NJ 07652
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PRINTING

Printsolutions, Englewood, NJ (201) 567-9622

COVER PICTURE

Armenia's First Lady, Bella Kocharian (middle)
Visits Avedisian School (Story on Page 4)

"Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth." Deuteronomy 11: 19-21

Haigazian University has been the jewel of the AMAA in the Near East from the first day of its inception on October 17, 1955. It has matured from being a class comprised of 43 students as a school of higher learning to a University with more than 750 students granting undergraduate and graduate degrees.

God has blessed Haigazian University by giving it dedicated benefactors, devoted leaders, capable and talented instructors, and generous supporters.

We, as Armenians, are extremely proud of Haigazian University because not only have our Armenian children from all over the world benefited by their excellent teachings, but also because many of Haigazian University alumni have entered important positions in different countries and have had a very good influence on those countries.

This year is the Golden Anniversary of Haigazian University, and the Armenia Community throughout the world shares this wonderful jubilee. The celebration in America began on March 5 when we had an AMAA/Lark Concert for Haigazian University in Glendale, CA, and it will continue for the entire year.

The year-long observances in Beirut will close with a week's program that includes the Haigazian University Baccalaureate Service on June 26; the Haigazian University Alumni Reunion in Mugar Garden, on June 27; a Haigazian University Banquet, on June 29; and concluding with the Haigazian University Commencement Ceremony, on July 1.

Haigazian University is the culmination of the dreams of our visionaries, Steve and Mary Mehagian and Stephen Philibosian, who saw the need of an Armenian Institution of Higher Learning. One that takes in all eligible students without regard to ethnicity, religion or race and gives them the benefit of a quality education. The AMAA has been very proud to have been in the forefront of creating this great university and will always remember those strong and committed individuals who by their philanthropy, advice, and hard work brought the dream to fruition.

Since Haigazian University is a cultural treasure the Armenian Community shares with the world, we ask you to celebrate the University's Golden Anniversary with a gift to the Haigazian University Scholarship Fund and reaffirm the tradition and values of our world-wide community.

By contributing to this Scholarship Fund, you will be helping the University in a significant way. Haigazian University has never turned down a qualified Armenian applicant who lacked funds. You can help perpetuate this assistance to the needy students who would not be able to attend a university without financial support.

May this celebration become an occasion for rededication and reconsecration of our joint goals with the same knowledge that "the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6) □

My Mission Trip To Armenia

Victor Thasiah*

My first inquiry about Mt. Ararat brought a rapid fire response. The lecture room window on the main floor of the seminary building was flung open. There, imposing and breathtaking, stood the majestic snow capped Mt. Ararat. Though the imposing creation stood some 50 miles away in the neighboring land of Turkey, it gave the awesome illusion that I could reach out the window and touch its splendor. By its side stood another smaller identically shaped snow capped mountain, as if paired with Mt. Ararat like mother and child, called Little Ararat. All of the passion, with which I had anticipated this vision, flooded me. I had so much wanted to see and take a photograph of this Biblical implication for myself and even more so for my 89 year old mother who still lives in Malaysia, and vigorously reads and meditates upon the Word daily. So most of that morning was spent on that one subject alone.

In Stephanavan (157 miles from Yerevan, with a population of 25,000), I spent the night with the minister's family that spoke no English. However, Harout had arranged for another single young woman whose first name was also Lilit (Lilit Ayvazyan) to serve as my translator. Lilit, who already has a Baccalaureate Degree in Theology, was scheduled to enter the master's degree program at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut. Lilit stayed at the minister's house till bedtime before returning to her house which was within walking distance, to help me with my communication with the minister Araik Ochinyan, his wife, their two children and the minister's widowed sister. They knew no words of English and I knew no words in Armenian, but since we have a common heavenly father, we were, without missing a beat, an ornithological specimen of congruent plumage congregate in close proximity. They were the most hospitable people. I observed such love and warmth as the minister's sister Anahit prepared the minister's children for school in the morning. I was told that her own child was being cared for by her in-laws in Vanadzor. Anahit held a weekday job in Stephanavan as a cook and



Victor Thasiah (standing first on the left) with Harout Nercessian and CE Workers in Alaverdi, Armenia.

left for Vanadzor each weekend to be with her child. The food was very good, the sleeping arrangement was comfortable but I had trouble with the hot water shower. They cranked up the electrical engine the previous night and warned me that the hot water would be available in three hours. Comforted by that thought, I rested well that night.

But the story with the hot water system was quite different in the morning. I have this thing worked out about bathing. I can survive many days without a body shower, but I can't be myself without washing my unruly hair and shaving my face every single morning. So that was what I did - I washed my head over the sink and shaved and all was well with me for the day. The perfect breakfast needed no translation - just plenty of pointing and smiles. Lilit was prompt in her arrival. The church building that stood tall in this little community was a gift of the Fresno First Armenian Presbyterian Church. The adjoining buildings provided the minister's residence and rooms for free dentistry, music classes, and a senior lunch program funded by a foreign humanitarian agency. Eighteen CE staff members and volunteers met at the class I taught and Lilit provided enthusiastic translation. The AMAA driver Arson from Yerevan came that afternoon to pick me up and bring me back to Yerevan.

The AMAA delegation of staff, ministers and church members then assembled at a down-town location at the foothill where the 1915 Genocide Memorial stands. This was the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide by the Turks. Half the country's population of 1.5 million people was in Yerevan to walk up the hill to pay homage and place flowers at the structure that houses an eternal flame. In a 40 feet circle, the flowers were piled up 6 feet high. It took us, following the church banner, led by Rev. Dr. Rene Leonian (the head of the AMAA in Armenia), two hours to maneuver the half mile trek to the memorial monument atop the hill. It was a site to behold. I had never ever in my 62 years of lifetime been in such an experience. □

** Badveli Victor Thasiah is the former interim pastor of the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church of Fresno, CA. The above are excerpts from a seven page report of a mission trip which included teaching at the Evangelical Seminary in Yerevan, holding seminars for Christian Workers in high population centers in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Alaverdi and Stepanavan, preaching at both the Armenian and English medium churches and experiencing the 90th Turkish Genocide of Armenians in 1915 Memorial. For a FREE complete report, e-mail to vthasiah@netzero.net*

Donna Evans, U.S. Ambassador's Wife Visits the AMAA Office in Yerevan

The Child Sponsorship Program of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) drew the close attention of Donna Evans, the wife of the American Ambassador to Armenia, John Evans, when she visited the AMAA headquarters in Yerevan, April 13.

After her two-hour visit, Mrs. Evans indicated that she wanted to promote the idea of sponsoring children as a Christmas gift to a loved one.

Mrs. Evans was greeted by AMAA Representative Rev. Rene Leonian and his assistant, Mr. Harout Nercessian.

Mrs. Evans toured the facilities of the Yerevan office and the adjacent AMAA medical clinic. She was briefed on the various ministries of the AMAA and the Evangelical Church of Armenia.

Since its inception, the AMAA has been concerned about the welfare of Armenian children and upon Armenia's independence in 1991, implemented this special program to support orphaned and needy children in the homeland.

Initially the AMAA's Child Sponsorship Program was started with just 37 children from Gyumri, which had suffered most from the devastating earthquake, and now, AMAA cares for more than 2800 children and their families throughout Armenia and Karabagh. A tax-deductible gift of \$250 a year sponsors one child and family and that care



Mrs. Donna Evans (standing 3rd from left) visiting AMAA's clinic in Yerevan.

includes food, clothing, personal hygiene, health-care items, and school supplies. The program takes care of the child until the age of 16 or 17, or upon the completion of the child's secondary education. □

Armenia's First Lady Visits Avedisian School

As part of the nation-wide ceremonies to Mark Motherhood and Beauty Day in the Republic of Armenia, April 8, the country's First Lady, Bella Kocharian, paid a visit to the Khoren & Shoushanig Avedisian School in Yerevan's Sepastia-Malatia region, where she visited the classrooms and talked with the children.

The Avedisian School is the first Armenian Evangelical School in Yerevan, Armenia, and was founded by the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) in May 1999.

Accompanying the First Lady were Aghvan Krikorian, Director of Malatia-Sepastia Region; Rev. René Léonian, AMAA's representative in Armenia; Borough officers; Avedisian School Board members, and some parents.

Greeted with the traditional salt-and-bread ceremony of welcome, the First Lady visited the school's Kindergarten and Elementary sections.

Following a reception in her honor, Mrs. Kocharian and guests gathered in the school's social hall for a presentation of songs, dances and recitations by the students.

After the performances, Rev. Léonian expressed his gratitude to the authorities of Armenia who had shown their confidence in the AMAA with the establishment of the school. He thanked the town of Malatia-Sepastia, for putting the present building under the AMAA's disposal for the use of the school, and finally to the city of Yerevan for the land offered to the AMAA for a new building which will encompass future added classes of the school.

Rev. Léonian also expressed his appreciation to AMAA Board member Edward Avedisian and his wife Pamela, of Lexington, MA, who are the sponsors of this school. He also paid tribute to the late Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, a past-Executive Director of the AMAA, "whose vision was

the establishment of such an educational institute in Armenia."

Before leaving, the First Lady Kocharian expressed her joy for being present at the Avedisian school for this special day and congratulated Principal Mrs. Melania Keghamian, the teachers and the students for their performance and their high achievements in the educational area.

The Avedisian School has consistently rated high in Armenia's education system and, last year, was named the best school in the country. This year the school has 220 students, 100 in the Kindergarten and 120 in Elementary grades. The Avedisian School has been one of the most important contributions of the AMAA to the people in the homeland. It serves in one of the poorest areas in the southwest district of Yerevan and is now in urgent need for expansion. There are ongoing plans to build an expansion on the piece of land which was provided by the city of Yerevan, to facilitate the addition of the new classes. □

Sold Out Crowd Attending AMAA Luncheon Shows Compassion and Hope for the Children of Armenia

The Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel was the beautiful setting of the AMAA Orphan and Child Care luncheon on Saturday, April 9. More than 450 were in attendance as Alice Chakrian, Lucy Gulvartian, and Eileen Keusseyan, luncheon co-chairs welcomed the crowd. Joyce Stein, National Co-Chair of the Committee, praised the work of the West Coast Committee and offered a prayer. Michelle Simourian, Co-Founder of the AMAA's East Coast Orphan and Child Care Committee described the work of the AMAA, which helps orphan-ages, schools, orphaned children living with relatives and handicapped children in Armenia. Elizabeth Agbabian, Co-Founder of the AMAA's West Coast Committee presented a touching video of children in Armenia who benefit from the proceeds of this luncheon.

After the lunch, the lights were dimmed

for the start of Pol Atteu's spectacular fashion show extravaganza, featuring his professional models as well as Armenian children wearing designs from his collection.

It was a fun filled afternoon as guests bid for the unique and beautiful silent auction items gathered by Lory Muncherian, Gayane Tatoulain, and other committee members.

In closing, LindaKay Abdulian and Arsine Phillips, current co-chairs of the West Coast Orphan and Child Care Committee, recog-

nized various donors, whose contributions were greatly appreciated, and thanked the entire committee for many months of diligent work, which made the event truly spectacular. □



AMAA Orphan and Child Care West Coast Committee members.

AMAA Summer Camp Committee Holds Its Spring Recital Featuring *Motyl* Chamber Ensemble

The Armenia Summer Camp/Christmas Committee of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) presented a Chamber Music Recital featuring *Motyl* Chamber Ensemble on Sunday, May 15 at the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York to benefit the children of Armenia and Karabagh. *Motyl* Chamber Ensemble's members each carry an intense repertoire, have performed in numerous concerts and recitals, and as a group are winners of the Artists International Competition. This unique ensemble performs music written by composers who were victims of the Holocaust. The name *Motyl*, which means "butterfly" in Czech, is derived from the poem *The Butterfly*, written by a child at Terezin (the concentration camp in Prague). The poem describes the last butterfly seen in the concentration camp.

The Program included music by Ulmann, Ludwig v. Beethoven, Komitas Vartabed, Egon Lede, Robert Dauber and Erik Hachikian.



AMAA Summer Camp/Christmas Committee members with the artists and guests.

At the end of the program, Erik Hachikian was recognized and invited to say a few words about his composition. Lucy Ishkanian was also recognized for being instrumental in introducing *Motyl* Chamber Ensemble to the AMAA.

As the AMAA's Executive Director, Andy Torigian indicated in his opening remarks, 100% of the proceeds of this event will support the AMAA's summer camps and Daily Vacation Bible Schools held in Armenia,

(cont'd on page 9)

Merdinian School Celebrates 23 years of Excellence

The future of the Merdinian School is bright, and with God's help we continue to raise the academic standards and look forward to erecting new buildings, and expanding to a secondary school," said Dr. Hrair Atikian, Chairman of the Board of Directors, at the School's 23rd annual banquet, on March 6.

In opening the program, Harut Der-Tavitian, a member of the Board of the C. & E. Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School, who served as master of ceremonies, paid tribute to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA), and the other organizations which have supported the School since its inception.

On behalf of the AMAA, Andrew Torigian, Executive Director, stressed the importance of the School's mission and offered the AMAA's continued support. For his part, Rev. Joe Matossian, Minister to AEUNA, also expressed wholehearted sup-

port and joy over the accomplishments of the school.

Other speakers on the program included Hovsep Injejian, the School principal and Dr. Peter Crowe, the Narekatis Professor of Armenian Studies at UCLA.

Entertainment for the evening was provided by Board Member Vatche Terzian, who presented a slide show of campus life; a musical selection by pianist Sarkis Baltaian; and the school's choir, under the direction of Mrs. Victoria Abrahamian-Elyasi.

Mrs. Alice Haig, a past AMAA Board member who was instrumental in the founding of the School, and Rev. Dr. Herald A.G. Hassessian, a former Merdinian School Board member, both of whom had died in



The Merdinian School's choir presenting musical selections.

the past year, were remembered with a moment of silence.

Founded in 1982, Merdinian School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The school nurtures children from preschool through middle school by offering a strong academic program, emphasizing Christian and ethical values for the development of sound character, and teaching Armenian and American traditions. □

AMAA and UCC Executives Meet Together in Cleveland on Their Joint Mission Projects

The executives of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) and the executives of the United Church Board for World Ministers (UCC) met on March 17, 2005 to discuss their future plans as mission partners. The AMAA and the UCC have worked together in getting aid to the Tsunami victims. They also work closely in helping the Armenians in Armenia by supporting the AMAA Child Sponsorship Program, the Armenian Evangelical Theological Academy in Armenia, and the AMAA Children's Camp projects. Support is also provided to Armenian students in Lebanon whose parents cannot afford to send their children to the Armenian schools. □



Mr. Albert Momjian, Esq., (AMAA Board Member and Solicitor), Mrs. Ann Kiernozek, (UCC Treasurer), Rev. Bennie Whiten, Jr., (Acting Executive Minister), Mr. Andy Torigian, (AMAA Executive Director), Dr. Peter Makari, (UCC Area Executive, Middle East and Armenia).

Evangelical Church of Chicago Breaks Ground for New Building

Now in its second century of service, the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago broke ground for a new edifice, at ceremonies on April 16.

Some 200 members and well-wishers were present for the ecumenical service which began with scripture readings by Rev. Sam Agulian, the parish's pastor, and Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA) ministers Rev. Kevin Kasper and Rev. Michael Matossian.

Archpriest Father Zareh Sahakian, from All Saints' Armenian Apostolic Church of Glenview, and several Deacons who were present at the ceremony, performed the Apostolic Blessing of Antasdan—the blessing of the four corners of the world and the human livelihood contained therein—the traditional blessings for new Armenian churches.

After the welcome of the community and distinguished guests, by the church's Moderator, David Hagopian, Chairman of Trustees Fred Simonian lead the act of groundbreaking. He introduced Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, Executive Director of the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC), who brought greetings on behalf of the AEWC and AEUNA. As he turned the soil he blessed the ground in the name of the Holy Trinity.

Mr. Simonian then introduced Nyree Agulian and Matthew Hagopian, current members of the church's youth group; Mrs. Armenette Miller who grew up in the church's youth group; and Mrs. Attia Megurdichian, a 93 year old Genocide survivor and a longtime member of the church. Mr. Simonian explained that, symbolically, these four individuals represent the generations served by the church.

The small parish had its humble beginnings as a monthly prayer group on the south side of Chicago in November of 1901. By 1916, with use of the facilities at the Moody Bible Institute, the church was officially formed with 42 charter members.

The church's present facility was donated by John Bezazian in 1945, and, in large measure, the sale of the Bezazian property made it possible for the church to move to a suburban location, more central to the community it now seeks to serve. It was fitting that Mr. Bezazian's granddaughter, Paulette Bezazian, was attending the ceremony.

Andrew Torigian, executive director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), brought the greetings of the association and congratulated the church on this milestone. He reviewed the history of the church and discussed how the local church is the foundation of the AMAA's ability to effect change in the mission field.

Also in attendance was Rev. Barkev Darakjian, Pastor Emeritus, who served the church from 1975 to 1996. Rev. Darakjian gave moving comments, noting how appropriate it was that in a week Armenians all over the world would be marking the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Armenians would still be

proclaiming the faith of their fathers and building churches.

Following the ceremony a reception was held at the Armenian Community Center in Glenview. □



Mrs. Armenette Miller, Matthew Hagopian, Genocide Survivor Mrs. Attia Megurdichian and Nyree Agulian turning the soil.

Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, MA Welcomes AMAA Executive Director Andy Torigian

Andy Torigian, the Executive Director of the AMAA joined the congregation of the Watertown Armenian Memorial Church for their Annual AMAA luncheon, organized by the Missions Committee of the church. Mr. Torigian spoke about the Armenian Children and their families in Syria, Lebanon, and Armenia that cannot afford an education and encouraged the congregation to participate in sponsoring these children. The response was very good. The congregation was very moved by the dedication of the AMAA who help these children and their families.



(l to r) Members of the Missions Committee of the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, Ma: Rick Ishkanian, Rachel Dohanian, Nora Orchanian (Chair of Missions), Andy Torigian (AMAA Ex. Director), Rev. Avedis Boynerian (Pastor of Watertown Church), Salpi Markarian, Hasmig Pianpiano.

'Brave' Pastor Aghabaloghlu Visits AMAA Headquarters

The Armenian Evangelical pastor who became an international hero among the Armenians as a result of his appearance on Turkish television, paid a visit to the headquarters of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) on Tuesday, April 12, 2005.

Rev. Krikor Aghabaloghlu, was invited to participate in a five-hour show on Turkish television to present "the Armenian point of view." in a discussion of the Armenian Genocide. Rev. Aghabaloghlu is a well-known activist who has already been jailed once for challenging the confiscation of his church's property by the Turkish government.

At the AMAA offices, Rev. Aghabaloghlu was introduced to the headquarters staff, and had discussion with both the Executive and the Administrative Directors. He reported on the progress of the Armenian Evangelical work in Turkey, which goes beyond the Armenian communities and reaches out to the local community. Many non Armenian Christians now regularly participate in the Sunday worship services

The outspoken and courageous Istanbul pastor was encouraged and supported by the AMAA to attend the Bitinia Bible School of Istanbul, from which he was graduated. In September 1999, the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East granted him a license to preach and perform the sacraments of Baptism and Communion in Armenian Evangelical Church of Gedik Pasha. He was ordained as a pastor in December 2002 and continues to serve as pastor and Chairman of the same Church.

On the program, much to the surprise of both Hulki Jevizoglu, the host of the show, and his main guest, historian Mehmet Saray, Rev. Aghabaloghlu made it clear that there is no doubt a genocide was committed against the Armenians. It is reported that while the two Turks were in a state of disbelief, Pastor Aghabaloghlu went on to state that all Turks in Anatolia know the truth about the Armenian Genocide, although no one dared to talk about the subject and that anyone who had the courage to speak about it, is

called a traitor, condemned by the media, taken to court, and sent to jail.

He kept on insisting that, as a clergyman, he has the obligation to tell the truth, and refused to allow himself to be silenced.

Undeterred, Rev. Aghabaloghlu said that he knew the facts first-hand from the experiences of his own family, and added that there is irrefutable evidence for the Genocide in hundreds of books in many languages and that everyone knew that the Armenians in Anatolia were the victims of Genocide.

Adding insult to the injury of the Turks, he asked rhetorically, "What did happen to the Armenians inhabiting that region? Did they evaporate? Did they decide to migrate en masse? Are there any Armenians left in Anatolia?"



Mr. Dikran Youmshakian, Rev. Krikor Aghabaloghlu and Mr. Andy Torigian.

Rev. Aghabaloghlu was born in Arapkir in 1957. He studied in Arapkir and Malatia and, in 1979, he was graduated from the University of Istanbul, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Education and majoring in the history of Turkey. He is married to Maria Semerji. They have a son and a daughter. □

Dorcas Aid International Director Visits the AMAA Headquarters



Mr. Dikran Youmshakian, Mr. Edward Janjigian, Dr. Dirk Jan Groot and Mr. Andrew Torigian.

Dorcas aid began in 1980 as a small group in Netherlands, mainly to assist those imprisoned for their faith. Today, after twenty five years, Dorcas Aid is an international organization providing development, social and relief services in twenty countries around the world including Armenia. Dorcas projects in Armenia are supported through active partnership with the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). AMAA supports Dorcas projects in Mozambique, Africa.

Dr Dirk Jan Groot, the director of Dorcas Aid International, visited New Jersey and had meetings at AMAA headquarters to coordinate the joint efforts of the two partner organizations. Mr. Groot also held meetings to reorganize Dorcas Aid America. Two new members were appointed to Dorcas Aid America Board - Rev. Dr. Attila Kocais, pastor of Magyar-Hungarian Reformed Church of Perth Amboy, NJ and Dikran Youmshakian, the Administrative Director of the AMAA. □

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Construction of our Temple

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:42)

In general, the commemoration of a birthday is a reason for joy. In relation to our Armenian Evangelical Church in São Paulo, Brazil, our attitude towards God must not only be an attitude of joy, but also of thanksgiving. The Lord has always been blessing us in rich ways through this church, where God's children have the opportunity to listen to His marvelous Word. And as the book of Acts reminds us, in this beloved Church, we have persevered by God's grace and mercy, devoting ourselves to the apostles' teaching and to our fellowship with one another. Our church community has truly been like a family where we have shared the joyous and the sad moments together. We have laughed together, cried together, broke bread together, and prayed together.

As Paul the apostle said, God, who began a good work in us, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). God, in His wonderful grace, provided to our parents, fifty years ago, the means for the construction of a temple for His beloved Armenian Evangelical community, in order to allow His children to be richly blessed through His Word and to worship Him with songs of praise. Time passed from that day, fifty years ago, when our church opened its doors for the very first time and we gather together now as the children of this fearless yet obedient generation of servants of God who have yielded to His calling. Today, with our church built, we pray that we may continue being God's blessing by being His instruments, using the temple for His glory and also for teaching our children and the next generation our love and reverence towards His church, so that they may be blessed by us as we were by our parents.

On this 50th anniversary occasion, the church held special worship services for thanksgiving with guest speakers and several other celebratory programs, expositions of historical pictures of the



Rev. Dr. Roy Abrahamian, the Senior Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of São Paulo.

church, video presentations and a dinner/banquet to highlight the history and the mission of the church. We were specially pleased to have amongst us Mrs. Louisa Janbazian from The United States (the wife of our former pastor Rev. Movses Janbazian) who came to be with us specially for this very special occasion. On Wednesday, May 22, she was the guest speaker of a special program organized by the Women's Guild of our church, where she spoke about the AMAA's work for the children of Armenia and Karabagh and showed a touching video - "Happy Childhood" - about the children in Armenia and Karabagh who benefit from the AMAA's ongoing mission. At the end of this special program donations were received for school supplies to be sent to Armenia through the AMAA's Summer Camp/Christmas Committee.

As a church, we would like to share our deep joy with all the AMAA members, since our church could not have existed today without the generosity that the AMAA has been providing us all through these years. May the Lord Jesus drop showers of His rich blessings on the AMAA, so that other churches may have the same joy as we are having presently.



May God bless us richly and may the Lord Jesus Christ always be glorified in the life of our Church. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Roy Abrahamian
Senior Pastor of São Paulo Church

(cont'd from page 5...)

Karabagh, and Georgia, where more than 10,000 children attend each summer.

A lovely reception prepared by the Summer Camp/Christmas Committee members followed the program, where the audience had the opportunity to meet the artists.

The Spring Recital was chaired by Elbiz Baghdikian, the co-chair of the New York/New Jersey area Summer Camp/Christmas Committee with Ani Chalemian as the Music Chair.

Keeping the day's program in focus, having a recital by the works of Holocaust victims to benefit the summer camps of Armenia - a country with children of victims of a Genocide, is truly the heart and spirit of the *Motyí* Chamber Ensemble and is the drive of the ensemble's dedication to remembering the lives of Genocide sufferers and survivors through their music.□

Armenian Evangelical Schools of Lebanon Commemorate 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and Mark the Armenian Cultural Day

Lebanon has quite often been on the news in the past months. Since the assassination of the former Prime Minister, Rafiq El Hariri, in February, it has undergone many changes. The whole country mourned the great loss; a million people expressed their opinions on the streets; the Prime Minister resigned; car bombs exploded in various areas (some of them a few miles from our schools); a new government was appointed and finally, campaigns and parliamentary elections took place.

These events definitely and immediately affected our schools and our families, yet amidst it all, the Armenian Evangelical schools of Lebanon not only endured all the shocks and daily challenges, but also carried forth their commemorations of the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and celebrations of the 1600th anniversary of the creation of the Armenian Alphabet.

Inter-school Contest Dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

The Armenian Evangelical Educational Council of Lebanon planned this unique contest entirely dedicated to the Armenian Genocide. The Council then published a booklet called "The Armenian Question" which included over one hundred questions and answers as well as related websites and distributed it to about 1,000 Armenian high school students in Lebanon. The five themes were: Historical background of the Armenian Question; the Genocide; Survival and Monuments; Related Books and Art; and Recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Twelve Armenian high schools participated in this very exciting event on April 16, each with a team of three students. The questions as well as the scores, which were projected on screens, made the event an exciting educational experience. The whole event was sponsored by Haigazian University.

The Armenian Evangelical College won the first prize, the Central High School won



The students marching in the streets of Bourdj Hammoud, Lebanon.



A presentation on the occasion of the Armenian Cultural Day.

the second and the Seminary of the Armenian Catholicossate won the third prize.

Armenian Cultural Day

Another unprecedented event was the Armenian Cultural Day celebration on May 21, and May 25, 2005. About 600

elementary students and their teachers from all the Armenian Evangelical schools of Lebanon started the day by marching in the streets of Bourj Hammoud, a densely populated Armenian district in the suburbs of Beirut. A marching band created the most unforgettable experience to all the participants and pleasantly

surprised the passers by. A man, still unknown to us, wrote in a local Armenian newspaper and called this march “an invitation to awareness.” He then said that those children were the newly reborn *Naregatsis* and *Sayat Novas*. When the students reached the courtyard of Shamlian Tatigian Secondary School, they assembled large pieces of a puzzle, thus constructing the historical map of Armenia.

The few hours were full of cultural activities. School choirs sang, Armenian dance groups performed and folk costumes were presented. One of the highlights of the day was the performance called “What Is the Armenian Cause?” by a group of school children.

The afternoon activities included a group game based on Armenian Art and a workshop for making the Alphabet.

The intermediate and high school students celebrated their Armenian Cultural Day in Anjar, an Armenian village in the Bekaa Valley, on May 25. About 500 students and teachers gathered in the schoolyard. The day opened with a prayer and announcements followed by two kinds of programs. The first was a mixture of Armenian dance, poetry, and music, all performed by very talented students from each participating school. The second program was the presentation of documents that the students themselves had prepared on the computer on the following themes: Historical Armenia; the Recognition of the Armenian Genocide; Genocide Monuments; from Mousa Dagh to Anjar; and World-Famous Armenians.

The afternoon activities included two art workshops, an Armenian dance class, a rally paper contest, and a roundtable discussion.

Prof. Sossy Balian, the Chair of the Educational Coordinating Committee, concluded the proceedings with a few words.

We praise God for a blessed and safe school year and extend our gratitude to the Armenian Missionary Association of America and its membership, who throughout the years have supported our schools both financially and morally and enabled us to continue our mission in the Near East. □



The Students at the courtyard of the Armenian Evangelical Shamlian Tatigian School of Nor Marash, Bourdj Hammoud.

Teacher Award Ceremony



Eleven teachers of the Armenian Evangelical Schools of Lebanon received gold medals and certificates as tokens of appreciation for their 25 or more years of service in the educational field. The ceremony took place on March 13, in the presence of hundreds of friends, colleagues and family members.

The medals and certificates were handed to the teachers by Rev. Mgerditch Karagoezian, the President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Rev. Soghomon Kilaghbian, Chair of the Central Committee, and Dr. Arda Ekmekji, Chair of the Educational Council. The joint choirs of the Armenian Evangelical College and Trad Social Centre School sang two beautiful songs.

The honorees were: Mr. Salman Awabdi, Mr. Aram Bakkalian, Mrs. Vehan Bedirian, Mr. Faysal Jalbout, Miss Anie Kasbarian, Mrs. Seta Karagoezian, Miss Makrouhie Ounjian, Miss Sossy Sarkisian, Mr. Ibrahim Sidani, Miss Sonia Sislian and Mr. Moustafa Tassi. □

«ԵՍ ԵԿԱՅ ՈՐ ԿԵԱՆՔ ՈՒՆԵՆԱՆ»

Վեր. Յովհաննէս Փ. Ահարոնեան

Երբ հարց տրուի, թէ մարդոց դիմագրաւած հարցերուն հիմնական եւ ամենակարեւորը ո՞րն է, ստացուած պատասխանները անտարակոյս պիտի ըլլան զանազան, բայց վստահաբար այդ պատասխանները իրենց վերջնական լուծումին մէջ պիտի եզրափակուին մէկ հիմնական հարցի մէջ՝ կեանքի հարցին:

Ըսուած է, թէ մարդ խորհող էակ մըն է: Էակ մը, որ կրնայ խորհիլ տրամաբանելով եւ անդրադառնալով: Մարդը միակ էակն է, որ կրնայ ինքն իր վրայ անդրադառնալ եւ իր գոյութիւնն ու անոր նպատակը հարցնուիործի ենթարկել: Ինչո՞ւ գոյ եմ: Ի՞նչ է կեանքի նպատակը: Ասոնք հարցումներ են, զորս միայն մարդ արարածը կրնայ հարցնել: Առաջին մարդը, որ կրցաւ առաջին փիլիսոփայական հարցը արծարծել, հաւանաբար՝ ամէն բանէ առաջ հարցուց. Ի՞նչ է կեանքը: Եւ անկէ ի վեր հարցը դարձած է մնացեալ բոլոր հարցերուն կորիզն ու կեդրոնը, քանզի ատիկա կը բնորոշէ ուրիշ ամէն խորհուրդ: Ատիկա այն կեդրոնական հարցն է, որ կը մեկնաբանէ եւ կը դասաւորէ ուրիշ ամէն հարց: Կեանքը աւելի խորունկ է քան՝ հաւատքը, քանի որ հաւատքը միայն սնամէջ բառի կը վերածուի եթէ չբխի սրտէ մը, ուր կեանք կայ: Անիկա աւելի հիմնական է քան՝ սէրը, ձգէ որ Աստուած իսկ սէր ըլլայ, քանզի առանց կեանքի սէրը անբեւեակայելի պիտի ըլլայ: Կեանքը համապարփակ ամփոփումն է ուրիշ ամէն բանի: Կեանքը կորիզն է մարդկային գոյութեան: Առանց կեանքի՝ ապրիլ չկայ: Գոյ ըլլալ՝ կը նշանակէ ապրիլ: Ահա թէ ինչո՞ւ կեանքը ամէն բանէ բարձր է ու թանկագին: Զարմանալի չէ որ մինչեւ իսկ ամենաթշուառ մարդը մեռնիլ չ'ուզեր: Ապրիլը հրեւումն է, եւ նպատակ մըն է ինք իր մէջ: Կեանքը հրապուրիչ է եւ հմայիչ, մահը ատելի: Մեր բանաստեղծներէն վաղամեռիկ Պետրոս Դուրեան պաղատագին կը բացագանչէ.

Եւ մահամերձն ալ կ'ուզէ երկու բան.

Նախ կեանքը, վերջը լացող մ'իւր վրան:

Նախ կեանքը, եւ եթէ այդ կարելի չէ, յետոյ լացող մը իր վրայ: Վիճաբար Հիւկո, հոչակաւոր հեղինակը «Թշուառներ»ուն, կ'ըսէ. «Մեռնիլ ոչինչ է, դժուար չէ, բայց չապրիլ զարհուրելի բան է»: Կեանքը մարդկային գոյութեան ամենաթանկագին եւ միակ գանձն է:

Զարմանալի չէ, թէ մարդիկ ապրած են՝ կեանքին հանդէպ իրենց ունեցած դիրքորոշումին համաձայն: Մէկուն ունեցած կեանքի փիլիսոփայութեան համար կեանքը առաւելաբար փիլիսոփայական գոյութիւն է, ուրեմն՝ մարդը ապրելու է որպէս առաջնակարգ անասուն, կամ՝ կենդանի մը: Բարոյապաշտ եւ դրապաշտ փիլիսոփայութեան համար կեանքը յարաբերութիւններու եւ ընկերակցութեանց ամփոփումն է, ուրեմն՝ մարդուն պարտականութիւնն է ապրիլ որպէս ընկերային արարած

մը: Ճգնաւորին համար կեանքը նամբորդի գոյութիւն մըն է, այդ իսկ պատճառով ան կը փորձէ ապրիլ աշխարհէ հեռու եւ անձնագապութեամբ: Հանոյապաշտին համար կեանքը բանաստեղծութիւն է, խինդ ու ծիծաղ:

Յիսուս ալ ապրեցաւ կեանքը, բայց անոր կեանքը տարբեր էր, քանզի կեանքի հանդէպ ունեցած իր տեսակետը ուրիշներուն տեսակետէն տարբեր էր: Յիսուս ո՛չ ստացուածք ուներ, ո՛չ ալ ընտանիք, բայց ան ճգնաւոր մը չէր: Ան ընկերութեան մէջ ապրեցաւ, կերաւ ու խմեց, բայց նիւթապաշտ մէկը չէր: Ներկայ գտնուեցաւ հարսանիքներու եւ իր ներկայութեամբ զուարթութիւն սփռեց ամէն կողմ, բայց ան հանոյապաշտ մը չէր: Անոր կեանքը տառապալից էր, բայց ան յոռետես մէկը չէր: Տառապեցաւ իր ամբողջ կեանքի ընթացքին եւ իր կեանքը վերջացուց սոսկալի ողբերգութեամբ մը, բայց ան չըսաւ Սողոմոն Իմաստունին պէս. «Ունայնութիւն, ունայնութեանց, ամէն բան ունայնութիւն է», եւ ոչ ալ՝ «Ժպտէ եւ կրէ կեանքի բերք, եւ կամ՝ առանց ժպտի կրէ», ստոյիկ իմաստունին պէս: Յիսուս կեանքի մէջ նպատակ մը, յաւիտենական նպատակ մը տեսաւ: Ան կեանքի տառապանքին մէջ կեանքի յաղթանակը տեսաւ, դժուարութիւններու, նեղութիւններու եւ թշուառութեանց մէջէն կեանքի հրեւումն էր եւ նպատակը գտաւ: Կեանքը իրեն համար նպատակի միութիւն մը ուներ: Անոր ապրելակերպը եզակի էր: Յանախ առանց բունի մնաց, բայց աղօթքով անցընելու համար: Անօթի մնաց, բայց անոր ծովապահութիւնը զօրութիւն արտադրեց: Յոգնեցաւ, բայց առանց մտահոգութեան ապրեցաւ: Նախատուեցաւ, բայց ան մերժեց ատել: Կեանքը բարդ էր, բայց ան պարզ ապրեցաւ: Կեանքը ապրեցաւ յաղթանակօրէն:

Ըսուած է՝ եթէ կ'ուզես Աւետարանը մէկ բառով բացատրել՝ այդ բարը «կեանք»ն է: Այն բառն է, որ իր մէջ կ'ամփոփէ Յիսուսի առաքելութիւնը: Յիսուսի ուսուցանել ուզած բանը կեանք էր: Ան ինզո՞քն էր ներկայացուց կեանքին հետ: Ան ըսաւ. «Ես եմ կեանքը», «Ես եմ յարութիւնն ու կեանքը», «Ես եկայ որ կեանք ունենան եւ ալ աւելի ունենան»:

Բայց ի՞նչ կը նշանակէ այդ:

Յիսուսի համար ամէն բանէ առաջ «կեանք» կը նշանակէր՝ անձը գտնել: Սոկրատ ըսաւ. «Ծանօթ գեղեցիկանալի բան է վայելել ընկերութիւնն ու անոր գեղեցկութիւնը, բայց աւելի հիանալի է ներքին համերաշխութեան մէջ ապրիլ բուն անձի հետ: Այդ ընկելու համար պէտք է գտնել բուն անձը: Գտնել, թէ՛ կեանքը իմաստ եւ նպատակ ունի, թէ՛ ապրիլ կը նշանակէ՝ մեծ պատասխանատուութիւն: Հասկնալ, թէ մարդը յաւիտենական արժէք ունի, թէ ան Աստուծոյ նման է եւ կրնայ ապրիլ սուրբ կեանք մը, մինչեւ իսկ միջավայրի աննպաստ պայմաններու տակ: Գիտնալ, թէ Յիսուս եկաւ այդ կեանքը առաւել օրհնութեան մը, եւ՝ նշմարիտ երջանկութեան մը

Pauline Lucy Khanjian

Pauline was born on October 6, 1933 in Oakland, CA to Manual and Pricilla Alexanian. At an early age she began taking piano lessons and became an accomplished soloist and accompanist. She pursued her undergraduate studies at Wheaton College majoring initially in music, but then switched to Christian Education to incorporate another of her passions. At the age of 23 Pauline was inspired to go overseas to Beirut, Lebanon. In Beirut she taught at the Armenian Evangelical Central High School for about two years, then returned to the US and taught at Simpson Bible College in San Francisco, while also serving as Director of Christian Education and organist at the Bethany Armenian Congregational Church. At that time, Dr. Markarian, President of Haigazian College in Beirut asked Pauline if she would be able to help institute educational programs at the college and so she obtained a Masters in Education Degree and went on to establish the Education and Psychology programs. She also organized annual musical productions at the college as well as



leading the choir of the First Armenian Evangelical Church. While in Beirut, Pauline met John Khanjian, a seminarian at the Near East School of Theology. They were married in the summer of 1963 in Chicago. Pauline and John were both engaged in teaching at Aleppo College and Pauline served as pianist for the Emmanuel Armenian Evangelical church. In 1966 back in California, Pauline taught 5th grade, then pursued nursing, acquiring her RN degree as well as her credential in Marriage and Family counseling. She acquired her MFT state license in 1971. After living in Beirut for 5 years and the loss of their first adopted son, Pauline was evacuated from Beirut by the American Embassy due to increasing civil unrest. Communicating only by letter they agreed that John would go about the process of adopting another baby and in July of 1976 Pauline flew to Belgium to meet up with John and their two newly adopted babies. After a move in 1977 to Salina, KS, Pauline became highly involved at the First Covenant Church.

Of all her accomplishments, Pauline considered her greatest to be raising her two children. She said that she wished she could have two lifetimes in order to learn all that she could and continue in service to the Lord. Indeed she followed Romans 12:11 "Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord."

վերածելու: Կեանք մը, որ իսկապէս կրնայ կեանք կոչուիլ: Այս է ինքզինքն անհնաւոր եւ գտնելու կերպը:

Տակաւին՝ կեանքը պէտք է մկատել իբր յարաբերութիւն մը Աստուծոյ հետ: Կեանքը, որ Քրիստոս է, եւ կեանքը, զոր Յիսուս մեզի կը փոխանցէ իբր գործնական ընկերակցութիւն մը Աստուծոյ հետ: Յիսուս ըսաւ. «Այս է յաւիտենական կեանքը, որ անոնք գիտնան միայն նշմարիտ Աստուծոյ եւ Յիսուս Քրիստոսը, որ դուն դրկեցիր»: Առաւել կեանքը՝ զԱստուած աւելիով անհնաւոր մէջ կը կայանայ: Գիտնալ զԱստուած որպէս Հայր եւ անոր հետ յարաբերիլ որպէս որդի: Յիսուս եկաւ այս յարաբերութիւնը հաստատելու, ահա թէ ինչու ան ըսաւ. «Ես եմ կեանքը», «Ես եկայ որ կեանք ունենան եւ ալ աւելի ունենան»:

Եւ դեռ՝ կեանք կը նշանակէ ծառայութիւն ուրիշներուն: Մարդը անջատ գոյութիւն մը չէ: Ան կ'ապրի ընկերութեան մէջ: Կեանքը կարելի է ուրիշ մարդկային էակներու յարաբերութեամբ: Անձնակեդրոն ըլլալ, իրերու կացութեան հետ համընթաց չէ: Անձը գտնել՝ ուրիշները, եւ անոնց հանդէպ մեր դիրքն ալ գտնել կը նշանակէ: Աւետարանը անհատիկն է, բայց անհատիկն, որ կ'ապրի ընկերութեան մէջ: Հոն է մարդկային սեռի միասնականութիւնը եւ միութիւնը: Կեանքի երջանկութիւնը չի կայանար շատ հարստութիւն ունենալու, այլ՝ զԱստուած անհնաւոր մէջ: Կեանքի երջանկութիւնը ուրիշներուն կեանք ներշնչելու մէջ կը կայանայ: Այն երիտասարդին, որ հարցուց, թէ՛ ո՞վ է իր դրացին, Յիսուս բարի Սամարացիի պատմութիւնը պատմելէ ետք, ըսաւ. «Դեմ, դուն ալ այնպէս ըրէ»: Յիսուս՝ ծառայելու, տալու, կեանք ներշնչելու համար եկաւ առատ եւ յորդահոս կեանք, երջանիկ եւ յաւիտենական կեանք: Այս է կեանքի նպատակը:

«Ես եկայ որ կեանք ունենան եւ ալ աւելի ունենան»: □

Վերահրատարկուած Վեր. Յովհաննէս Փ. Ահարոնեանի Նիլիցին Կամֆ Քո Գիրքէն (Պէյրոս 2003)

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA News.

Aivazian, Emma Memphis, IN	Guleserian, John "Sarkis" Cranston, RI
* Aroustamian, Armen Brockton, MA	Ishkhanian, Barkev Mosman, Australia
Babigian, Marion Cresskill, NJ	* Kazandjian, Seta Aleppo, Syria
* Balabanian, Anisse Pasadena, CA	Kenosian, Charles Lynn, MA
Baroudjian Smith, Virginie Paso Robles, CA	* Linsley, Lora Oakland, CA
Dingilian, Louise Bronx, NY	* Mateosian, Hripsime Montebello, CA
* Esajian, Bright Hanford, CA	Sarkissian, Peggy San Diego, CA
* Fleury, Martha Cranston, RI	

* Memorials designated for AMAA

Announcement

Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, California, is looking for a new senior minister who can both deepen our faith and lead us to the kind of growth that would utilize the many gifts of its members. He or she must have the ability to preach both in Armenian and English, demonstrate a deep spiritual life, a commitment to the mission of the church, and administrative abilities. We believe the position would offer great opportunities to the right candidate who is eager to respond to this challenge. For further information please contact:

Hrag M. Marganian, M.D.
835 Panorama Road - USA
Fullerton, CA 92831
e-mail: cjam6@adelphia.net
Telephone and FAX: 714 446-0115

Irene H. Garabedian

Irene H. Garabedian died on December 15, 2004 in Indianapolis, IN at the age of 96. Born in Kharpert, Turkey (historic Armenia) in 1908, she was the daughter of Paul Boghos Jafarian and Nazley Darakjian Jafarian. Irene was a survivor of the Turkish genocide against the Armenians in which vast numbers of her relatives were killed and her world was torn asunder. She remained in Kharpert with her mother and three siblings under harsh and difficult conditions from 1915 until 1923 when the family was finally able to leave Turkey and join her father in Boston, MA. An account of Irene's early life is included in her father's autobiography "Farewell Kharpert". Irene later graduated from Burdett Business College and worked as a bookkeeper before marrying Attorney Charles Garabedian in Worcester, MA in 1935. She and Charles were the loving parents of two daughters, Elaine and Claire. After the death of Charles in 1952, Irene continued to work until her early 70's.

As a longtime resident of Worcester, MA, Irene was a devoted and active member of the Armenian Congregational Church of the Martyrs', where she served as treasurer and a member of the Board of Trustees for over 50 years. Further, she was a board member of the Armenian Nursing Home, Jamaica Plain, MA and was active in the Worcester branch of the AGBU, for which she organized monthly fund-raising luncheons for a number of years. She had been a longtime sponsor of the AMAA Orphan/Child Scholarship Fund, a supporter of the AMAA and established the Charles Mesrob Garabedian AMAA Endowment Fund.

In 1997, Irene moved to Indianapolis, IN to be close to her daughter Elaine but kept telephone ties with many friends and relatives in Worcester. Throughout her life, she exemplified the qualities of integrity, honesty, compassion, perseverance, frugality and loving devotion to church and family.

She is survived by her daughters: Elaine (Donald) Minassian of Indianapolis, IN, Claire (Olvi) Mangasarian of Madison, WI, a sister, Ethel Duffett of Orlando, FL, 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. □



Pepronia Merjanian

Miss Pepronia Merjanian, Ph.D., passed away on Sunday, March 13, 2005, in Pasadena, CA. Her body was put to rest on Thursday, March 17 during a family private interment service.

Dr. Merjanian was born on March 20, 1912 in Marash, Turkish Armenia (Cilicia). At the age of three, she experienced the pain suffered by many Armenians during her formative years.

Upon the pullout of allied forces from Eastern Anatolia, her reunited family, like many other Armenian families, left Marash and settled in Aleppo, Syria. Later, the family moved to Beirut, Lebanon, where Pepronia attended the Miss Web Girls High School, the Beirut College for Women and the Near East School of Theology.

Her desire to expand her education compelled her to seek education in the United States, in spite of financial uncertainties. Stateside, she studied at the University of Hartford, CT and obtained her undergraduate degree in liberal arts. The following year, she obtained her Master of Arts (MA) degree in Christian Education from the Hartford Seminary in CT. In 1951, she obtained a second MA from the Teachers College of Columbia University of New York, this one is psychological foundations. Later, in 1975, she went on to receive her Ph.D. in psychology from California Graduate Institute. In California, she also obtained her teaching credentials (for life) for all grades and junior college.

Dr. Merjanian's professional career covered a wide spectrum: teaching, counseling, ministry, social work, and authoring books. Two of her books were published, *The Joy of Teaching*, (a best-seller) in 1966 and 1977, and *Money and Women's Self Esteem: A Christian Perspective*, 1971. Dr. Merjanian had achieved international recognition, and the list of her accomplishments is very long indeed, not only within the Armenian community, but in her surroundings as well, wherever those were. She was active in educational, religious, and political causes, which she supported morally and materially.

She led an exemplary life of modesty, dedication, gratitude and generosity, while truly valuing her faith and family. □



Bedros Kellikian

Deportation, disease & starvation could not overcome the will of genocide survivors, Garabed & Khatoon (Sagherian) Kellikian's will to live. And thus in 1919 soon after they returned to Zeytoun, their first son, Bedros, was born. Turmoil, insecurity and violence once again uprooted them as they moved to the town of Kirikhan, where Bedros continued to experience a difficult childhood losing a mother and younger brother to typhoid. In 1928, Garabed, along with his children, Bedros and Ovsana moved to Aleppo, Syria where they took refuge in the outlying camp of Zeytoon Khan. Bedros was soon enrolled at the Sahagian Elementary. A year later he was at Bethel Armenian Evangelical School, where he graduated from 6th grade, displaying an exemplary, scholarly talent. In 1934, he enrolled at Aleppo High School for Boys, where he excelled in a similar show of prowess. Two years later however, a deceased benefactor put an unfortunate end to his formal education. Never giving up he sought knowledge through correspondence with the British Institute of Engine Technology investing every penny saved. In the meantime, he taught himself foreign languages such as English and French. In 1939, he started teaching in Ayn Aroos, a small village of Northern Syria until World War II broke.

Bedros was an active member of his church and community and took his Christian faith seriously. Throughout his life, he has been known for his involvement in the Armenian Evangelical community in Syria & Lebanon. He served as lay preacher for fifteen years, whenever and wherever needed. His attention was focused on the youth and he was a founding member of Christian Endeavor Society Summer Camp in Kessab, Syria.

In the early 90s Bedros and his wife Azniv moved to Los Angeles, CA to rejoin their three daughters, Sona, married to Zaven Khanjian; Hasmig, married to Arsene Baran; and Nora, married to Vahan Bezdikian. In 1996, Bedros lost his beloved wife Azniv.

Bedros Kellikian's motto in life has been to live with an unwavering loyalty to the people of his ancestry and forever expand the mind, enrich the spirit, and be a beacon of good and morality to those around him. He entered into eternal rest on March 29, 2005. □



Rev. Norair Melidonian

Rev. Norair Melidonian, one of the oldest ministers of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, entered his rest on April 6, 2005, at age 98. His funeral services were held on Monday April 11, 2005, at the Church of the Hills, in Forest Lawn Memorial Park at Hollywood Hills, CA. Officiating at his funeral were the Armenian Evangelical ministers of Greater Los Angeles area.



Rev. Melidonian was born in 1907. He was the son of Dr. Levon and Ovsanna Melidonian. He received his college education at the American (Anatolia) College in Salonica, Greece, the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, and the Near East School of Theology also in Beirut, Lebanon. He did post graduate work in homiletics (art of preaching) and pastoral theology at the School of Religion, San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

He married a fellow seminarian, Vera Zasheva. Rev. Melidonian served eleven years in two Armenian Evangelical churches in Bulgaria: Sophia, the capital, and Varna. He was ordained in 1944 in Sofia, Bulgaria, by the Bulgarian Evangelical Union. He came with his family to USA in 1948.

From 1948-1959 Rev. Melidonian served Armenian Gethsemane Congregational Church and in 1960 accepted the call of the Armenian Cilicia Congregational Church where he served until his resignation in 1986.

Besides his parish duties, Rev. Melidonian served the Armenian Evangelical Union of California in the capacity of moderator in the late 1960s. During his tenure, he introduced some beneficial changes, such as annual exchange of pulpits of the Armenian Evangelical churches in California, and family conferences. He was also instrumental in promoting better relations with the Armenian Apostolic churches. Rev. Melidonian also played an important role in the merger of the Armenian Evangelical Unions of the Eastern and Western United States.

Rev. Melidonian was a man of literary talents. He was the author of two books, **"The Soul of a Mother"** and **"Inner Turmoil"** and one unpublished manuscript, **"The Role of the Armenian People in Civilization"**. He was a dedicated minister who put his whole heart and soul in all his noble endeavors. □

Nellie J. Kazanjian

Nellie Kazanjian, longtime New Hartford resident, beloved mother-grandmother-great grandmother, store proprietor and community leader, passed away on May 11, 2005.

Born on October 14, 1915 in Utica, NY, Nellie was the daughter of the late Jaleela Mardenly and Karkour Murad. She attended South Street School, Union School and Utica Free Academy. As the second of eight children, she had to leave high school before completing the eleventh grade to work in her father's grocery store. There she learned the value of hard work and integrity that would be a driving force throughout her life.

In 1936, Nellie married the late George J. Kazanjian. In 1941 they purchased and ran the Quality Food Store on Pearl Street in New Hartford. Nellie managed to raise four children, be a homemaker and superb cook, and help her husband run the business. After her husband's death in 1973 and her retirement from the store, the Village of New Hartford issued a proclamation thanking them for their personal interest and concern in the welfare of generations of customers and friends for over thirty years. In 1984, the New Hartford Rotary Club awarded Nellie the Community Service Award.

Nellie loved people and had a gift for making friends, engaging conversations and lasting impressions wherever she went. Upon retirement she turned her boundless energy to the community.

Nellie was a volunteer reader to children at the New Hartford Public Library and served as vice president and board member of the Young At Heart Club for senior citizens. She was a founder of the New Hartford Adult Dining and Recreation Center established in 1986.

On her 80th birthday, Oneida County saluted Nellie for her meaningful contributions to the citizens and the history of New Hartford by issuing a proclamation declaring October 8, 1995 as "Nellie Kazanjian Day in Oneida County."

Deeply devoted to her family, Nellie was relentless in her determination to instill a strong sense of family values, faith and self-esteem in her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

She is survived by her son George and wife Mary Lou Kazanjian of New Hartford, New York; daughter Miriam A. Kazanjian of North Bethesda, Maryland; son John and wife Patricia Kazanjian of El Paso, Texas, six grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. □

João Georges Gaidzakian

João Georges Gaidzakian, son of Zabel and George H. Gaidzakian was born in Beirut, Lebanon on Nov. 24, 1924. He received his primary education at the Armenian Evangelical Central



High School of Beirut, Lebanon where his father, George was the principal and his mother Zabel, was one of his teachers.

In 1935 with his parents and sister Hildalea moved to Brazil and the family started a new life in a new country. The first years were difficult with a totally different language and culture. However, soon he was able to conquer these obstacles and embraced with much love this new phase in his life.

He finished his schooling in 1947 at the Baptist College. Since his early childhood he had shown artistic talents, in painting, artwork and music. He took violin lessons since the age of 13 and participated in numerous musical programs in the Armenian community, in churches and in schools as violin soloist. He had been the Choir director of the Zarkatsman Arshaluys (the former Young Adults group of the Armenian Evangelical Central Church of São Paulo) and from 1965-1969 was invited as choir director of the Presbyterian Church of Goias, Brazil.

He had also studied Agronomy & Electrical Engineering, as well as Airplane Photography and in these areas he worked in many public departments of the country.

In 1957 he married Angel Der Hovanessian and the couple had three children: Cinthia Alids, Gisele Marcia and George Andre.

João Georges was always interested with topics related to Armenia, to the people of Armenia, the Armenian Community and his church. He was an active member of the Armenian Evangelical Central Church of São Paulo and a member of the Church Council.

From 1980-1992 (with some intervals) he was the administrator of the Armenian Center (Clube Armenio) of São Paulo and from 1988-1991 the President of the Marsh Comm-patriotic Association of São Paulo, Brazil.

João was a well-respected and dignified person in his community and faithful to God until the last days of his life. He died in Goiania, Brazil at the age of 80. A memorial service was held on Sunday, May 29, 2005 at the Armenian Evangelical Central Church of São Paulo, Brazil. □



AMAA Armenia Summer Camp/Christmas Committee Drive For School Supplies For Children in Armenia and Karabagh

Suggested items for School Supplies

Elementary

Colored pencils (no crayons)	Pens
Pencil sharpener	Plain white paper
Pencils	Ruler
Erasers	Colored markers
Folders	Pencil case
	Notebook with lined paper

High School

Pens	Notebook with lined paper
Erasers	paper
Pencil sharpener	Folders
Pencils	Highlighters
Pencil Case	Calculator

Enclosed Please find _____ school supply packages or \$ _____ in lieu of school supplies for _____ packages at \$10 each.

Name _____

Address _____

(Please make tax-deductible checks payable to AMAA – earmarked for School Supplies)

Please send School Supplies or donations in lieu of School Supplies to the AMAA at
31 W. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652.

For more information you may call Louisa Janbazian at (201) 265-2607.

The school supplies will be distributed to the children at the conclusion of Summer Camps. They will joyfully return home ready for school!

Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652

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